

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A prize contest system employing an access counter on an Internet web page for counting the number of visitors to the web page, wherein the web page is set as the object of the prize contest and a selection number is determined based on the count of the access counter at a predetermined date and time.

2. A prize contest system employing an access counter on an Internet web page for counting the number of visitors to the web page, wherein the web page is set as the object of the prize contest and a selection number is determined based on one or more digits in the count of the access counter at a predetermined date and time.

3. A prize contest system employing an access counter on an Internet web page for counting the number of visitors to the web page, wherein the web page is set as the object of the prize contest and a selection number is determined based on one or more low-order digits in the count of the access counter at a predetermined date and time.

4. A prize contest system employing an access counter on an Internet web page for counting the number of visitors to the web page, the system comprising:

means for specifying the web page of a company sponsoring the contest;

means for determining a selection number based on the count of the access counter on the specified web page at a
5 predetermined date and time; and

means for receiving records of participants in the contest and the selection number the participants have predicted.

10 5. A prize contest system employing an access counter on an Internet web page for counting the number of visitors to the web page, the system comprising:

means for specifying the web page of a company sponsoring the contest;

15 means for determining a selection number based on one or more digits in the count of the access counter on the specified web page at a predetermined date and time; and

means for receiving records of participants in the contest and the selection number the participants have
20 predicted.

6. A prize contest system employing an access counter on an Internet web page for counting the number of visitors to the web page, the system comprising:

25 means for specifying the web page of a company sponsoring the contest;

means for determining a selection number based on one or more low-order digits in the count of the access counter on the specified web page at a predetermined date and time; and

5 means for receiving records of participants in the contest and the selection number the participants have predicted.

7. A prize contest system employing an access counter
10 as recited in any of claims 4 through 6, wherein the company serving as the sponsor for the prize contest is changed after a prescribed entry-accepting period.

8. A prize contest system employing an access counter
15 as recited in any of claims 4 through 7, further comprising a counter numbers center for disclosing rules of the contest on the Internet and for recording predictions of the selection number received via the Internet from participants in the contest.

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9. A prize contest system employing an access counter as recited in claim 8, wherein monetary or material prizes are awarded to winners of the contest only when the winners step forward and claim their prize from the counter numbers
25 center.

10. A prize contest system employing an access counter as recited in either of claims 8 or 9, wherein a web server operated by the counter numbers center comprises:

- means for disclosing rules of the contest on a web page;
- 5 means for receiving predictions of the selection number via the Internet during the prescribed entry-accepting period;
- means for reading the count of the access counter on the web page operated by the sponsor at the predetermined time after the entry-accepting period and for determining the
- 10 selection number based on the count; and
- means for announcing the selection number on the web page.

11. A prize contest system employing an access counter as recited in any of claims 8 through 10, wherein a web server operated by the counter numbers center comprises:

- means for disclosing rules of the contest on a web page;
- means for notifying via e-mail participants registered for an e-mail magazine regarding the rules of the contest;
- 20 means for receiving predictions of the selection number via the Internet during the prescribed entry-accepting period;
- means for reading the count of the access counter on the web page operated by the sponsor at the predetermined time after the entry-accepting period and for determining the
- 25 selection number based on the count;
- means for notifying via e-mail participants registered

for the e-mail magazine of the selection number;

means for announcing the selection number on the web page.

5 12. A prize contest system employing an access counter as recited in any of claims 1 through 11, wherein the monetary or material prizes are carried over to the next prize contest when there are no winners or when the winners do not come forward to accept their prizes.

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13. A prize contest system employing an access counter as recited in any of claims 1 through 12, wherein the monetary or material prizes are divided among the winners when there is a plurality of winners.

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